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Human Resources and Social Development Canada**CANADA, B.C. WORK TOWARDS SIMPLIFYING STUDENT AID**

VICTORIA – The Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, and the Honourable Murray Coell, Minister of Advanced Education, announced today that they have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that works towards a federal-provincial partnership, making it easier for students to manage their student loans in the province of B.C.

“This partnership demonstrates our commitment to making student financial assistance more accessible to students,” said Solberg. “Streamlining and simplifying Canadian student financial assistance programs is a goal of the Government of Canada, and is a key element of recent investments announced in Budget 2008.”

“The Campus 2020 report made clear that student aid programs are more complex than they need to be, and we have been working hard with our federal and provincial partners to renew and improve the way we do things,” said Coell. “Student financial assistance is a high priority for the B.C. government, and the new harmonization and single payment approaches in this MOU will be a great improvement for students in our province.”

The recently signed MOU marks a milestone in efforts to improve the delivery of student loans in B.C. in order to ensure a positive loan experience for borrowers. By harmonizing the delivery of the Canada Student Loans Program and StudentAid BC, students in B.C. will benefit by having one process through which to manage both their federal and provincial student financial assistance.

Under this MOU, the repayment process will be one of the key priorities for both levels of government. As such, accessing financial assistance information and services will be simpler and less time-consuming for students.

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